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EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION

Report of the Special Political Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Yuriy SHEVCHENKO (Ukraine)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 46/44 of 9 December 1991.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 18 September 1992, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the Special Political Committee.

3. The Special Political Committee considered the item at its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 20 and 21 October (see A/SPC/47/SR.3 and 4). It had before it the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (A/47/293).

4. The Special Political Committee also had before it a letter dated 17 August 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Solomon Islands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General pertaining, inter alia, to the item, transmitting, on behalf of the nine South Pacific Forum countries that are also Members of the United Nations, namely: Australia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the Final Communiqué of the Twenty-third South Pacific Forum, held at Honiara, Solomon Islands, on 8 and 9 July 1992 (A/47/391).

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II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/SPC/47/L.3

5. At the 3rd meeting, on 20 October, the representative of Canada introduced a draft resolution (A/SPC/47/L.3), sponsored by Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Samoa, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay.

6. At the same meeting, it was announced that Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, India, Italy and Jordan had joined as sponsors of the draft resolution.

7. At the 4th meeting, on 21 October, it was announced that Mongolia had joined as sponsor of the draft resolution.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.3 without a vote (see para. 9).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

9. The Special Political Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Effects of atomic radiation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955, by which it established the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and its subsequent resolutions on the subject, including resolution 46/44 of 9 December 1991, in which, inter alia, it requested the Scientific Committee to continue its work,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, 1/

Reaffirming the desirability of the Scientific Committee continuing its work,

Concerned about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which man is exposed,

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1/ A/47/293.

Conscious of the continued need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on man and his environment,

Bearing in mind the decision of the Scientific Committee to submit, as soon as the relevant studies are completed, shorter reports with supporting scientific documents on the specialized topics mentioned by the Committee, 2/

1. Commends the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making in the course of the past thirty-seven years, since its inception, to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of atomic radiation and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement;

2. Notes with satisfaction the continued and growing scientific cooperation between the Scientific Committee and the United Nations Environment Programme;

3. Requests the Scientific Committee to continue its work, including its important coordinating activities, to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources;

4. Endorses the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for its future activities of scientific review and assessment on behalf of the General Assembly;

5. Also requests the Scientific Committee to continue at its next session the review of the important problems in the field of radiation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session;

6. Requests the United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public;

7. Expresses its appreciation for the assistance rendered to the Scientific Committee by Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-governmental organizations, and invites them to increase their cooperation in this field;

8. Invites Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports of the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly.

2/ A/38/142, para. 5.